

**Remarks of Mayor Paul Fraim
Metal Matisse Dedication
MacArthur Square
Saturday, May 18th 2013
7:30 PM**

Thank you and good evening. I'm pleased to be here tonight to unveil a dramatic piece of public art for the City. So let me take a moment to thank Karen Rudd, Public Art Commission, Vice Chair Craig Reilly and everyone with the Commission for bringing this to us.

Public art has the power to energize our public spaces, stimulate our thinking and transform where we live, work and play into more welcoming, beautiful and interactive places.

This project has taken a little longer to complete than we thought, but I think the wait was worth it and believe everyone is happy with the result.

The artwork I have the honor to dedicate to our City today is titled, "Metal Matisse" by artists Damon Seeley and Cameron McNall from Electroland out of Marina Del Rey, California. Cameron is with us today along with several other fabricators and artists from Electroland. Thank you all for coming across country to be here with us.

The Electroland team specializes in creating objects, interactive experiences and large scale public art projects. Their site-specific pieces employ a broad range of media, including light, sound, images, motion, architecture and interactivity – as you can see from the piece before you.

MacArthur Station is one of the most visible crossroads in downtown, and when the Commission was originally conceptualizing a work of art to anchor the site they challenged the folks at Electroland to bring us an interactive sculpture that was audacious.

We wanted a piece that was heedless of restraints and unconventional. I think Metal Matisse meets that test. Not only does it make a dramatic statement for this specific location, it also celebrates the renewal of Norfolk as a high tech, sustainable, forward-thinking city.

With its bold, oversize design, Metal Matisse introduces a totally new look to MacArthur Square without taking anything away from the surrounding architecture. In fact, it's a perfect fit.

It is our hope that the presence of this piece of public art can help heighten our awareness, question our assumptions, and reveal a new perspective.

The addition of the MacArthur Memorial Visitors Center - along with the MacArthur Station light rail stop, the MacArthur Center shopping mall and the remodeled Virginia Maritime Association building - has made this space into one of the most attractive and active parts of downtown. The transformation will be complete when the Slover Memorial Library – under construction just behind us – opens a little over a year from now.

Thanks again to the artists at Electroland for creating this wonderful piece and to the Public Art Commission, whose members worked with perseverance over the past couple years to commission this piece of art.